ترقیموں، عرض دیدہ اور مہروں

پر

خدابخش سمینار

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مقالہ از

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کلکتہ

languages of India and abroad including Arabic, the language of the Holy Quran.

But an important piece of note occurs in the middle of the page, signed by one Mohammad Saleh is dated the 21st Jum.-I of the 4th year Julus.

In my opinion this Mohammad Saleh may be the skillful scribe and poet who flourished during the reign of Shah Jahan. His father was Mir Abdullah Mushkeen-Raqam, an outstanding scribe of the same period. (See, Aml-i-Saleh vol. III, P- 444)

The text of this note narrates upto some extent the essential history of this particular deluxe copy in the following manner.

....

مصحف مجید بخط شیخ ... ترجمه ... بین السطور بخط خفی نوشته ... [illegible] ... (؟)

[illegible] ... عبدالرحیم ... (؟) ... (؟) .. محمد جعفر ... [illegible]

[illegible] ... (؟) ... [illegible] شده

العبد محمد صالح

The different notes by the pen of Abdur Rahim Khan, Khan Khanan, the renowned official of Akbar & Jahangir's [illegible] (d.1036/1626-1627), appear on several folios. I prefer to copy here, the text of an interesting note found on the folio [illegible] of this copy and signed by Khan Khanan himself with the date, the place etc. as follows.

....

[illegible]

[illegible] ... ولا رطب ولا یابس الا فی کتاب مبین ... [illegible]

[illegible] ... ذی قعده سنه [illegible] از هجرت / حرره عبدالرحیم ابن محمد بیرم ... [illegible]

[illegible]

....

On the basis of these evidences mentioned above, it appears decidedly that this beautiful copy of the Holy Quran was steadily written by the skillful scribe for the personal reading (.........) of Abdur Rahim Khan Khanan. He was undoubtedly a versatile scholar having extra ordinary command on sevral

Now, in connection with other relevent notes found in manuscript copies, I like to point out, that such notes may be classified as follows:-

(I) A teaching certificate, termed as اجازة......or السماع......

(II) A note stating the purchase of the book, or the transcription of the same copy for a certain person.

(III) Some ambiguous or mysterious phrases which may inform about the mentality of the book lovers.

The Asiatic Society, Calcutta, is a reputed centre of learning from its very beginning and it possesses near about ten thousand manuscript copies in Arabic & Persian. It is quite difficult for a layman like me to bring out selected pearls from the bottom of an ocean like that of the Asiatic Society. However a few examples of Colophons, Arzdeedas, etc. found in some copies of the Asiatic Society are furnished below.

1- A Deluxe Copy of the Holy Quran

(Ms. Ar. 5 in the As. So. Calcutta)

The copy is in bold and distinct Indian Naskh, fully bearing diacritical marks within double juduals. Throughout the copy inter-linear notes and glosses in Arabic are written by the same hand in a very small but distinct Naskh character skillfully.

The flyleaf on the backpage bears two seals of Mughal emperors Shahjahan and Alamgir.

The content of the First Seal (date obscure) is

"محمد شفیع بندهٔ شاهجهان"

The content of the 2nd Seal could not be ascertained except that year 1069 and the name of the emperor i.e. Alamgir. This Seal is very similar to the Seal of Alamgir fixed on the back page of Diwan-i-Hafiz in Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna.

Above the second Seal the following words are noted.

"بتاریخ غرهٔ رجب المرجب سنهٔ
جلوس میمون هدیه
... روپیه منظور شد"

Another short note appears in the lower space, as follows:

"۲۰ شعبان سنه قرآن ... شد"

of Rajab, in the year A.H. 1188, at my home, in 'Atfatul Ghassāl situated in the area of Suwaiqatûl-Muzaffar, Egypt ...."

The Seal or ..خاتم........ in Arabic or ....مُهر.. in Persian, denotes the link of the Manuscript, with the person mentioned in the Seal. Sometimes a Seal of the custodian of the collection also appears on the title page or the backpage of the copy. Books bearing seals, supply a lot of information regarding the literary taste of the owners and even borrowers. But a Royal Seal was not necessary to be fixed on each and every copy belonging to the king. It is evident from the rare copy of Diwan-i-Hafiz, preserved in the Khuda Bakhsh Library,Patna, which contains an autograph of Sultan Hussain Mirza, Baikra (the ruler of Herat since A.H. 873 to A.H. 910), but it does not posses any of his seals.

As far as the term 'Arzdeeda' is concerned, it may be said that the first part of it i.e. ..عرض..... means persuing a book. This being combined with th second part namely Deeda, signifies the consultation and study in the same copy and pershaps the physical verification of it from time to time.

Very often we find with the term 'Arzdeeda', or without, another term تحویل شد... with the name of a certain person. It clearly shows a particular system of requisition and thereafter receiving the book by the incharge.

It may also be noted here that the system of such regarding seems to be followed even outside India. Here again I want to draw your attention towards the same rare copy of Diwan-i-Hafiz. The back page of it contains two short notes or Arzdeedas linked with the reign of Sultan Hussain Mirza Baikra, they are as follows.

(۱) "۱۷ محرم سنة ۱۴ عرض دیده تحویل سهیل شد"

(۲) "سلطان حسین میرزا بایقرا ۶ شعبان سنة ۱۸ تحویل سهیل شد"

The first note is dated 17th, Muharram, 14th Julus and that the copy was returned to teh custody of Suhail.

The 2nd of them contains the name of Sultan Hussain Mirza Baikra with date 6th Shaban, 18th year of Julus and that the book was returned to Suhail.

The 14th year of Julus of Sultan Baikra is corresponding to A.H. 886 and the 18th year of his Julus means the year A.H. 890. Further it may be inferred from the first note, that the particular copy of Diwan-i-Hafiz (now published by the authorities of Khuda Bakhsh Library, Patna.) had been transcribed at any time before the year A.H. 886, and not after it.

India.

2. Mulla Ahmad Jiwan, one of the well known writers in Arabic furnishes the beautiful story regarding his work Al-Tafsirat-al-Ahmadiah, in the Colophon written by him:-

يقول الفقير إلى الله الغني أحمد المدعو بملا جيون بن أبي سعيد بن عبد الله بن عبد الرزاق بن خاصة خدا الحنفي المكي
الصالحي: قد شرعت في تسويد الأبيات الشرعية في البلدة الطيبة اميتهي حين قرأت الحسامي في سنة ألف وأربعة
وستين وسني يومئذ ستة عشر سنة، وفرغت منه سنة ألف وتسعة وستين في البلدة المباركة المذكورة حين قرأت
شرح مطالع الأنوار وسني يومئذ احدى وعشرون سنة. ثم بعد أزمنة قد صححته ... تقررت لي حين التدريس في
بلدة اميتهي سنة ألف وخمس وسبعين وسني يومئذ سبع وعشرون سنة. الحمد لله ... على
رسوله محمد وآله وأصحابه أجمعين ... التفسيرات الأحمدية ... المطبع الكريمي
ببمبئي محلة بهندي بازار سنة ١٣٢٧هـ، ص ٤٢٠

"Says the beggar of Allah, Al-Ghani: Ahmad called Mulla Jiwan son of Abu Said b. Abdullah b. Abdur Razzaque b. Khasa-i Khuda, Al-Hanafi, Al-Makki, -- I started the drafting of this work in the sweet [illegible] Amethi, when I had been reading Al-Husami, at the age of sixteen in the year A.H. 1064, and became free from the work in the year A.H. 1069, in the same blessed city, then I had been studying Sharh Matali-Al-Anwar, at the age of 21, then after sometimes I revised and corrected it during my tenure of teaching in the city Amethi, in the year A.H. 1075 at the age of 27......"

However a Colophon containing such details is very rare.

ii. Syed Murtaza Zabidi, a native of Belgram (dist. Hardoi) who died in Egypt, writes the Colophon at the end of his Taj-Al-Arus in the following manner:

....

"... وكان مدة اشتغالي في هذا الكتاب من الأعوام أربع عشرة سنة وأيام مع شغل البال و
تراكم الكروب بلا انفصام، وكان آخر ذلك في نهار الخميس بين الصلاتين ثاني شهر رجب من شهور سنة ١١٨٨
بمنزلي في عطفة الغسال بخط سويقة لالا بمصر ... وكتبه العبد الراجي ... محمد مرتضى الحسيني الواسطي
الزبيدي نزيل مصر عفا الله عنه وسامحه بمنه وكرمه" [تاج العروس ج ١٠، ص ٤٥٤، الطبعة الخيرية ١٣٠٦]

....

"The duration of my writing of this work covers 14 years, in addition to other engagements. The last moment of this duration occured, between the two day time prayers, on Thursday, the 2nd

A Discourse on Colophons, Seals, Arzdeedas and other relative notes found in Perso-Arabic Codices

We are not assembled here, to tell the story of a printed book, though it is lovely too and too lovely. But it is the story of a handwritten book, which is the main point of discussion.

A handwritten book, whether it is an autograph, or its copy made by any transcriber, direct or indirect, is called a "manuscript" in English, a "Makhtuta" or "Nuskhah Khattiah" in Arabic and "Nuskhah-i Dasti-Nawis" or "Nuskhah Qalami" in Persian and Urdu.

It is quite natural that a reader should be informed by any means, at least, about the following matters.

(I) The title of the book ;

(II) The subject dealt with ;

(III) The year, when the copy was written either by the author or by the scribe ;

(IV) The place, where the original autograph or a copy was written ; and,

(V) The name of the scribe, in case it is not autograph.

It is not necessary to be found the above mentioned particulars in each and every manuscript. However, some of the author furnish the information, partly or fully, in the preface, if any, or at the end of the work, just after the proper text. Similarly the scribes do not give information, necessarily, regardidng thier performance.

The word "Colophon" denotes, the above mentioned points of information, furnished partly or wholly, by the author himself or by scribe, at the end of the manuscript. In Arabic & Persian it is called ...[illegible].... or .....[illegible]..... and sometimes termed as .[illegible]....

Though the existence of a Colophon is not necessary, but it becomes quite helpful in evaluating the manuscript for various reasons.

It would not be out of place to give only two examples of the Colophon-writing by the Arabic authors who belonged to